

Message Text

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47

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 ARAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 L-02

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 CU-02

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P R 061600Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6403

INFO AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0098

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CO

SUBJ: LABOR MIN IMPLIES AMERICAN INFLUENCE BEHIND STRIKES

1. LABOR MIN DE CROVO HAS INSINUATED THAT AMERICAN INFLUENCE WAS BEHIND RECENT ILLEGAL STRIKES IN COLOMBIA, ACCORDING TO A FRONT PAGE STORY IN JAN 5 EL TIEMPO.
 2. UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION FOLLOWS OF STORY HEADLINED "THEY PROVOKE ILLEGAL STRIKES FROM ABROAD": LABOR MINISTER.
 3. LABOR MINISTER MARIA ELENA DE CROVO DENOUNCED THE PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY OF EXTERNAL FORCES WHICH PROVOKE ILLEGAL STRIKES "IN ORDER TO PRODUCE A STATE OF ANARCHY WHICH MAY EASILY LEAD US TO DICTATORSHIP."
 4. SHE MADE THE DECLARATION IN REFERRING TO RECENT STRIKES AND DEMONSTRATIONS AND COMMENTED THAT "THESE FORCES, AS OTHER INTERNAL ONES, ACT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THAT THEIR PURPOSE WOULD SIGNIFY THE FIGHTING REJECTION OF THE ENTIRE COLOMBIAN PEOPLE, WHICH HAS A VERY CLEAR SENSE OF SOVEREIGNTY AND OF THE HISTORIC OPPORTUNITIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE WHICH EXIST IN THE GOVERN-
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MENT OF PRESIDENT LOPEZ".

5. ALTHOUGH THE MINISTER DID NOT SPECIFY WHICH WERE THESE EXTERNAL FORCES, SHE SAID THAT IN COLOMBIA IT WAS ENOUGH TO SHOW AN AMERICAN PASSPORT TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO STAY IN (COLOMBIA) INDEFINITELY, IN CONTRAST TO ALL THE STANDARDS WHICH ARE REQUIRED OF COLOMBIANS TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES.

6. "WHICH ONES ARE CIA AGENTS, WHICH ARE SIMPLE TOURISTS OR FRIENDS OF COLOMBIA? WHICH ARE GREEN BERETS, DRUG TRAFFICKERS OR ANTI-GOVERNMENT AGITATORS? NOBODY CAN TELL BECAUSE WE HAVE NO STANDARDS OF IMMIGRATION WHICH REVEAL POLICE OR COURT BACKGROUNDS, OR THE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES OF THOSE WHO ENTER THE COUNTRY PROTECTED BY AN AMERICAN PASSPORT", SHE ADDED.

7. (THE MINISTER) MADE THIS ALLUSION UPON BEING APPROACHED BY (THE WRITER) SHORTLY AFTER INAUGURATING THE FIRST SEMINAR ON LABOR AND SOCIAL SECURITY. SHORTLY BEFORE SHE HAD REFERRED BRIEFLY IN HER SPEECH TO "EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENEMIES." END OF RELEVANT PORTION OF ARTICLE.

8. NOMMENT: THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THE MINISTER'S REPORTED INSINUATION THAT AMERICAN INFLUENCE HAS FOSTERED ILLEGAL STRIKES OR, AS FAR AS EMB IS AWARE, ANY OTHER STRIKES IN COLOMBIA. THE ONLY ILLEGAL STRIKE OF RECENT MEMORY WAS THAT OF THE BANCO POPULAR EMPLOYEES IN EARLY DECEMBER (BOGOTA 11031), WHERE THE COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED CSTC IS IN CONTROL. THE AIFLD-ASSISTED DEMOCRATIC UNIONS UTC AND CTC APPEAR TO HAVE ENJOYED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE MINISTER. MOST RECENTLY THEY HAVE SUPPORTED THE RETENTION IN THE MIN OF LABOR OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY, OPPOSING THE PLAN TO TRANSFER IT TO THE HEALTH MIN.

9. AIFLD DIR VICENTE SOSA, WHO ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN ON SICK LEAVE FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS HAS MAINTAINED GENERAL CONTACT WITH LABOR AFFAIRS, WAS SURPRISED BY AND AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN THE REPORTED ALLEGATION.

10. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT MIN DE CROVO IS STILL SMARTING FROM WHAT SHE MAY CONTINUE TO FANCY AS EMBASSY LONDON'S REFUSAL TO GIVE HER A VISA, DESPITE THIS EMB'S NOTE EXPLAINING IN CONFIDENTIAL

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DETAIL THAT SHE WAS NOT REFUSED A VISA. (BOGOTA 11295). HER APPARENTLY OFF-THE-CUFF REMARKS TO THE REPORTER MAY BE ENTIRELY DUE TO HER CONTINUING PIQUE. ON THE OTHER HAND, HER COMMENTS COULD INDICATE THE BEGINNING OF A MOVE BY HER AGAINST THE AIFLD PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA. MRS DE CROVO'S LEFTIST AND HYPERNATIONALISTIC ACTIVITIES AND BELIEFS, PERHAPS REINFORCED BY RECENT REPORTS LINKING CIA AND AIFLD, WOULD APPEAR TO MAKE HER A NATURAL ADVERSARY OF AIFLD.

11. AS OF JAN 6 NO OTHER BOGOTA PAPERS HAD PICKED UP THE LABOR
MINISTER'S IMPROMPTU REMARKS ALTHOUGH HER SPEECH WAS AMPLY
REPORTED.
WHITE

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